

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2014

## CONTACT

Contact Marla Augustine, Communications and Legislative Services,  
(402) 471-4047 or [marla.augustine@nebraska.gov](mailto:marla.augustine@nebraska.gov)

## DHHS Releases Young Adult Alcohol Opinion Survey April is Alcohol Awareness Month

**Lincoln**— The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services released a report on its young adult alcohol opinion survey. The Division of Behavioral Health conducted the annual survey of 3,468 young adults aged 19 to 25 by mail. The report compared three years of data.

"The survey holds good news and bad news," said Scot L. Adams, director of the division. "For example, driving while impaired seems to be going down, while binge drinking among certain young adults is up."

### Findings from the report:

- Among all respondents 19-25, roughly 45 percent reported binge drinking in the past month (44 percent in 2010, 47 percent in 2012, and 45 percent in 2013).
- Binge drinking among 19 to 20 years olds appears to be on the rise. From 2010 to 2013, reported past month binge drinking among females age 19-20 increased from 28 percent to 32 percent. During this same period, past month binge drinking among males 19-20 increased from 26 percent to 34 percent.
- Past month alcohol-impaired driving decreased among those 19-25. Reported past year driving under the influence of alcohol decreased from 30 percent in 2010 to 22 percent in 2013.

### On attitudes and perceptions:

- Underage binge drinking of all forms, whether for those under 18 or those 18-20, was viewed strongly as wrong or very wrong. 93 percent of young adults perceived it as wrong or very wrong for individuals under the age of 18 to get drunk, and 79 percent perceiving it as wrong or very wrong for those age 18-20 to get drunk.
- There was also a strong disapproval of providing alcohol to minors, with 83 percent of young adults perceiving it as wrong or very wrong to provide alcohol to individuals under 21 years of age.

The Young Adult Alcohol Opinion Survey was initiated because there was very little data available on the behaviors, attitudes and beliefs of 19- to 25-year-olds on binge drinking. The survey was developed by a work group of state agencies, organizations and individuals. Because the majority of young adults have driver's licenses, data from the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles was used to create the survey sample. To maximize the response rate, DBH administered the survey during the winter holiday and spring/early summer, when young people were more likely to be at their home address. Respondents had the option of completing the survey online, but very few did. Almost all of the respondents returned the survey by mail. The survey has had a 30-40 percent response rate every year.

"Knowing more about norms and attitudes allows us to refine and target programs to address the needs of the young adults in our state," Adams said.

The survey was paid for by funding from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Office of Highway Safety. The report can be found at <http://1.usa.gov/1dK9OrK>.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month.